



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION, ATTITUDE,  
LEARNING STYLE AND ENGLISH GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS**

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**By**

**MARGHANY MAHMOUD MARGHANY**

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**Chairman: Professor Dr. Noran Fauziah Yaakub**

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The purpose of the present study was to examine performance of UPM freshmen in English grammar according to motivation, attitude, and learning style (i.e. tolerance of ambiguity) on the one hand and according to gender, socio-economic status, location, and exemption status on the other. Based on Dunkin and Biddle's model, tolerance of ambiguity is classified as one of the process variables, while the other six independent variables come under the category of context variables.

The samples of the present study comprised 349 freshmen at Universiti Putra Malaysia. The samples enrolled in May semester 1998. The samples were divided into 227 non-exempted students and 122 exempted students. The non-exempted students, unlike the exempted students, were required to sit for one of the English proficiency courses administered by the Faculty of Modern Languages

Studies (i.e. BBI2401, BBI2402, BBI2403). The 227 non-exempted students included 100 students from BBI2401, 47 students from BBI2402, and 80 students from BBI2403. The 122 exempted students comprised 72 students from the Faculty of Medicine, 30 TESL students from the Faculty of Educational Studies, 12 students from the Faculty of Veterinary, and 8 students from the Faculty of Forestry.

Written data were collected through selected instruments, namely (1) discrete-point exercises both multiple choice and fill-in-the blank, (2) grammaticality judgment exercises, (3) translation-based task, (4) two sets of structured questionnaire adopted from Noran Fauziah Yaakub, Habibah Elias, Rahil Mahyuddin, Hajjah Nora Mohd. Nor and Mohd. Faiz Abdullah (1993a) for attitude (34 items) and for motivation (31 items), and (5) 12 item questionnaire for learning style; which was developed based on Christopher Ely's second language tolerance of ambiguity scale (Reid, 1995).

The findings showed that exemption status was the most significant contributing factor towards respondents' performance in English grammar. The second immediate significant factor was respondents' tolerance of ambiguity in the classroom during the teaching process. Respondents' attitudes and motivation came as the third and fourth significant contributors towards performance respectively.

Students who held positive attitudes towards learning English outperform those who had negative attitudes. The more tolerant of ambiguity on the part of UPM freshmen, the better performance in English grammar. Urban students obtained the highest performance scores. Even though gender was not a significant factor to grammatical competence, female students outperformed their male counterparts with slight difference.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**PERHUBUNGAN DIANTARA MOTIVASI, SIKAP, STAIL  
PEMBELAJARAN DAN KECEKAPAN NAHU BAHASA INGGERIS  
PELAJAR-PELAJAR PENDIDIKAN TINGGI**

**Oleh**

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**Januari 2000**

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Tujuan kajian ini ialah untuk menerangkan prestasi nahu bahasa Inggeris pelajar baru UPM dari segi motivasi, sikap dan stail pembelajaran (iaitu toleransi kepada kekaburan) pada satu pihak dari segi jantina, status sosio-ekonomi, lokasi dan status pengecualian pada pihak yang lagi satu. Berpandukan kepada model Dunkin dan Biddle, stail pembelajaran telah diklasifikasikan sebagai satu daripada pembolehubah proses, manakala enam pembolehubah bebas yang lain adalah di bawah kategori pembolehubah konteks.

Sampel bagi kajian ini terdiri daripada 349 pelajar-pelajar tahun pertama di Universiti Putra Malaysia yang telah mendaftar pada semester Mei 1998. Mereka terdiri daripada 227 pelajar yang tidak dikecualikan dan 122 pelajar yang telah dikecualikan daripada mengambil kursus kemahiran Bahasa Inggeris. Tidak seperti pelajar-pelajar yang dikecualikan, pelajar-pelajar yang tidak dikecualikan dikehendaki mengambil satu kursus kemahiran Bahasa Inggeris yang ditawarkan oleh Fakulti Pengajian Bahasa Moden (iaitu BBI2401, BBI2402, BBI2403 ).

Seramai 227 pelajar yang tidak dikecualikan terdiri daripada 100 pelajar dari BBI2401, 47 pelajar dari BBI2402, dan 80 pelajar dari BBI2403. Seramai 122 pelajar yang dikecualikan terdiri daripada 72 pelajar dari Fakulti Perubatan, 30 pelajar TESL dari Fakulti Pengajian Pendidikan, 12 pelajar dari Fakulti Veterinar dan 8 pelajar dari Fakulti Perhutanan.

Data bertulis telah dipilih melalui beberapa instrumen, iaitu: (1) latihan diskret yang menggunakan soalan anika pilihan dan mengisi tempat kosong, (2) latihan nahu, (3) terjemahan, (4) dua set soalselidik yang berstruktur yang diubahsuai daripada Noran Fauziah Yaakub, Habibah Elias, Rahil Mahyuddin, Hajjah Nora Mohd. Nor, dan Mohd. Faiz Abdullah (1993a) untuk sikap (34 item) dan untuk motivasi (31 item), dan (5) soalselidik 12 item untuk stail pembelajaran yang digubal berdasarkan kepada skala toleransi kekaburan bahasa kedua oleh Christopher Ely (Reid, 1995).

Keputusan kajian menunjukkan status pengecualian adalah faktor yang paling signifikan kepada prestasi nahu bahasa Inggeris. Faktor kedua yang signifikan ialah toleransi kepada kekaburan di dalam kelas semasa proses mengajar. Sikap dan motivasi responden adalah penyumbang ketiga dan keempat yang signifikan kepada prestasi.

Pelajar yang bersikap positif terhadap pembelajaran bahasa Inggeris mempunyai prestasi yang lebih tinggi daripada mereka yang bersikap negatif. Lebih tinggi toleransi kepada kekaburan, lebih baik prestasi nahu bahasa Inggeris. Pelajar dari bandar memperolehi skor prestasi yang tertinggi. Walaupun jantina tidak menjadi satu faktor yang signifikan kepada kecekapan nahu, pelajar perempuan mengatasi prestasi pelajar lelaki.



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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2000 to conduct the final examination of Graduate Student on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled "The Relationship between Motivation, Attitude, Learning Style, and English Grammatical Competence of Higher Education Students" in accordance with Universiti Putra Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Putra Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulation 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. The Committee Members for the candidate are as follows:

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Date: 11 MAY 2000

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

  
(MARGHANY MAHMOUD MARGHANY)

**Date:** 3 / 3 / 2000

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